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ABSTRACT

In 1999, Florida implemented the One Florida Initiative, a plan to end race-conscious decision making in employment, contracting, and higher education. The proposal for higher education was to replace race-conscious admissions with the Talented 20 Program, a policy that in theory would increase access for underrepresented students without considering race. This report discusses the history of the Talented 20 policy, compares popular descriptions of the plan to its actual structure, and examines whether the Talented 20 policy is as effective as suggested. Data come from interviews with key staff at five Florida State University System campuses and with state education and government agencies; review of public documents and statewide and institution specific data; and school data. To provide a complete picture of the circumstances in Florida, the report looks at the realities of the state's demographics and relevant school and higher education data showing the broad pattern of inequality in the state. Next, it examines administration of the Talented 20 policy and its results. After discussing the responses of the University of Florida and Florida State University to the plan, the report offers recommendations for Florida and other states considering similar admission plans. Information on the course credits required by the Talented 20 Program and the sliding scale used for admission to Florida's state university system are appended. (Contains 19 tables and 70 references.) (SM)

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APPEARANCE AND REALITY IN THE SUNSHINE STATE: THE TALENTED 20 PROGRAM IN FLORIDA

By Patricia Marin and Edgar K. Lee
Foreword by Gary Orfield

February 2003

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Foreword

Florida's leaders reported a remarkable success in 2000. With his decision to end affirmative action and launch new policies to pursue his goal of "One Florida," Governor Bush stated that he had solved one of the most controversial issues in the United States. He reported that the Talented 20 policy, which guarantees admission to students in the top twenty percent of their public high school graduating classes to the state university system, had not only preserved, but actually increased diversity in higher education. According to the Governor, here was a simple, race-neutral solution to a knotty problem.

If his often-repeated claim were accurate, it would immediately transform the national debate over affirmative action. Who would pursue a controversial policy when there was a simple, mechanical, non-racial solution that actually worked better?

Since our project is devoted to creating a new generation of research on issues of civil rights, the Florida claims obviously merited close examination. If the Florida evidence had supported the claims of Florida officials, I would have recommended replacing affirmative action with this new approach. Unfortunately, the promises made about the program have proven to be largely illusory.

Several researchers and I went to Florida in 2001 and conducted scores of interviews on five campuses with various state officials. Within our first few days in the state, it became abundantly clear that what happened in Florida differed in almost every important respect from the official claims. Even more troubling was the fact that much of the press coverage had simply reiterated those claims without asking any of the obvious questions such as:

1) How much affirmative action had there been in Florida prior to the One Florida initiative?
2) How many students were admitted under the Talented 20 program who would not have been admitted anyway?
3) Why would this system be favorable to minorities given the fact that, on average, Whites tend to receive higher grades?
4) How many students actually went to college?
5) Since race-conscious affirmative action was only forbidden in admissions, was it still being used in recruitment, financial aid, outreach, and on-campus support of Black and Hispanic students?

The answers to these and other questions proved to be startling. However, to give the plan more time to work and obtain official statistics from state offices, we waited for more data to tell the story. That data confirmed our analysis.

There is simply no basis for the claim that Florida's Talented 20 percent plan solved the affirmative action issue. In fact, this report indicates that the percent plan was virtually irrelevant. In the few places that actually used race-conscious affirmative action in admissions prior to the implementation of the Talented 20 program, affirmative action was replaced by a variety of other affirmative race-related policies and programs.

This is a case of striking disconnect between claims and data and I strongly encourage readers to reach their own judgment after considering the statistics and the record. I urge journalists and university researchers in Florida to more fully examine and report on what has happened on their campuses and in the state's university system as a whole. If Florida's experience is to be injected into the national debate on affirmative action it must be fully documented and critically investigated. We hope that this report contributes to that effort.

Gary Orfield
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Co-Director, The Civil Rights Project
Harvard University

February 5, 2003

Introduction

On November 9,1999, Floridas Governor Jeb Bush announced his One Florida Initiative, a plan to end race-conscious decision-making in employment, contracting, and higher education. Bush explained: "With my One Florida Initiative, we can increase opportunity and diversity in the state's universities and in state contracting without using policies that discriminate, or that pit one racial group against another" (One Florida Initiative, 1999). The governor's proposal for higher education was to replace race-conscious admissions with the Talented 20 Program, a policy that in theory would increase access for underrepresented students without considering race (One Florida Initiative, 1999).

The One Florida Initiative was the first time any state's governor had abolished affirmative action policies in higher education and other state agencies. In California and Texas similar changes had occurred, but only as a result of court decisions or voter referenda. Less than a year after he signed the One Florida Initiative, the governor characterized the results of the Talented 20 Program as hugely successful (Selingo, 2000d).

While Governor Bush predicted that his plan would be hugely successful, the One Florida Initiative spurred some of the largest civil rights protests in Florida's history ("One Florida," 2000). In particular, many critics argued that this initiative represented a step backwards in higher education access for underrepresented groups. Protestors included the NAACP, the Baptist Ministers Conference, Florida NOW (National Organization for Women), the Florida AFL-CIO, students within and outside of Florida, and leaders such as the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Martin Luther King III (Avery, 2000; Halton, 1999; Mark, 2000). Many relevant constituencies, including higher education leaders, claimed to have been ignored in the decision-making process and suggested that the policy was politically, not educationally, based. For example, Charles Young, president of the University of Florida, was quoted as saying the initiative was one of "preemptive capitulation" to Ward Connerly's anti-affirmative action campaign[1] (Associated Press, 1999).

Questions were also raised regarding how much analysis and evaluation had occurred prior to the plan's implementation (Selingo, 1999c). As of November 1999, when Governor Bush announced the One Florida Initiative, higher education officials indicated that they had not done any data analysis on "how the new policy would affect students who would have been admitted under affirmative action" (Selingo, 1999c, p. A34). The governor's policy aides were unable to specify "how many students who are now given special consideration because of race would also qualify under the 20 percent plan" (Selingo, 1999c, p. A34). Nevertheless, the governor remained confident of his plan. He believed that race-conscious affirmative action in university admissions was not needed because the State University System (SUS)[2] had been able to increase minority enrollment over time.

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[1] See "History: The One Florida Initiative and The Talented 20 Admissions Policy" of this report for more details.

[2] Until June 30, 2001, the State University System of Florida included ten universities: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), Florida Atlantic University (FAU), Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), Florida International University (FIU), Florida State University (FSU), University of Central Florida (UCF), University of Florida (UF), University of North Florida (UNF), University of South Florida (USF), and University of West Florida (UWF). On July 1, 2001, the New College of Florida (NCF) became the eleventh member of the State University System, after a law passed by the Florida legislature separated it from the University of South Florida.

Although the SUS Board of Regents was scheduled to vote on the plan in January 2000, the governor delayed the vote in order to hold three public hearings to discuss the impact of the plan. This was a result of a sit-in led by Florida Senator Kendrick Meek and Representative Tony Hill on January 17 at the state Capitol (Selingo, 2000b). On February 17 the Board of Regents approved the Talented 20 Program. In the meantime, the NAACP filed an administrative challenge to the plan, charging that an inappropriate decision-making process was used in changing university admissions policies. Eventually, Administrative Law Judge Charles Adams decided in favor of Governor Bush's plan (Selingo, 2000c), and in July 2000 the Talented 20 policy officially went into effect.

While race-conscious admissions policies were also prohibited in SUS graduate and professional programs, these restrictions were delayed until fall 2001 admissions in order to give institutions time to develop alternative recruitment methods (Selingo, 1999e). The university presidents were given direct responsibility for implementing the One Florida Initiative in graduate and professional school admissions, for which no Talented 20-type program was implemented. However, in a given year, SUS schools could admit up to 10 percent of the graduate students as exceptions to determined criteria (Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, p. 13). Nevertheless, these amended criteria could not include race, national origin, or sex. Our report, however, is limited to the impact of the Talented 20 Program on undergraduate admissions.

In light of the ongoing affirmative action debate, the need to understand the Talented 20 program, presented as an alternative to race-conscious admissions policies in higher education, has become critical. This report discusses the history of the Talented 20 policy, compares the popular descriptions of the Talented 20 plan to its actual structure, and examines whether the Talented 20 policy is as effective as suggested. To provide a complete picture of the circumstances in Florida, the report examines the realities of the state's demographics, as well as relevant school and higher education data showing the broad pattern of inequality in the state. The report next examines the administration of the Talented 20 policy and its results. We then provide a closer look at the University of Florida and Florida State University, the premier institutions of the SUS, highlighting the ways they responded to One Florida. Finally, we offer conclusions and recommendations for Florida as well as other states considering similar admissions plans.

In reviewing the Talented 20 policy, we relied on several important data sources. First, we interviewed key staff at five of the campuses in Florida's SUS, as well as various state education and government agencies in Florida.[3] We also reviewed various public documents and obtained statewide and institution-specific data from the Division of Colleges and Universities' Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Policy Analysis, as well as school data from Florida's Board of Education.

[3] For example, we interviewed admissions officers, financial aid counselors, affirmative action officers, administrators of outreach and recruitment programs, faculty, etc. Interviewers included Stella Flores, Edgar Lee, Patricia Marin, Gary Orfield, and Delia Spencer-Young.

History: The One Florida Initiative and The Talented 20 Program

In 1999, Ward Connerly, the University of California Regent behind the voter referendum that ended affirmative action policies in California (Proposition 209), brought a similar campaign to Florida – The Florida Civil Rights Initiative (Florida Civil Rights Initiative, n.d.). His intention was to put a voter referendum on Florida's November 2000 ballot that would result in the end of gender- and race-conscious policies in public education, employment, and contracting. While Connerly's campaign was in progress, Governor Bush implemented a review of state affirmative action policies to determine their legal viability (Weissert, 1999).[4] In particular, the universities in the state system had been using various affirmative action programs including race-conscious scholarships, recruiting programs, and/or race-conscious admissions policies (Weissert, 1999).

On November 9, 1999, in an attempt to preempt a court decision or ballot referendum eliminating race-conscious affirmative action in Florida (Selingo, 1999a),[5] Governor Bush voluntarily ended affirmative action by issuing Executive Order 99-281, the One Florida Initiative, thus eliminating the use of race- or gender-conscious decisions in government employment, state contracting, and higher education. With regard to education, however, Governor Bush's plan differed from Ward Connerly's in that the governor's plan only eliminated the use of race and gender in college and university admissions decisions (see Appendix A for the Non-Discrimination in Higher Education section of the One Florida Initiative). Race or gender could still be considered in awarding scholarships, conducting outreach, or developing pre-college summer programs. With the implementation of the One Florida Initiative, Florida became the first state to have an elected official end its affirmative action policies in education and other state agencies.

To provide an alternative to race-conscious admissions policies, Governor Bush established the Talented 20 policy to the Florida State University System and as a model for the country. This plan was implemented beginning with undergraduate admissions for fall 2000. According to the amended SUS admissions rules, the Talented 20 Program states:

> A student applying for admission who is a graduate of a public Florida high school, has completed nineteen (19) required high school units[6]..., ranks in the top 20% of his/her high school graduating class, and who has submitted test scores from the Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination Board or from the American College Testing program shall be admitted to a university in the State University System. The State University System will use class rank as determined by the Florida Department of Education (Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, p. 11).

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[4] On July 20, 2000, Connerly's campaign ended unsuccessfully when the justices of Florida's Supreme Court indicated that the wording of the proposed referendum did not meet the state's constitutional requirements of dealing with a single subject and being written clearly (Marshall, 2000).

[5] Regent Steve Uhlfelder was quoted as saying, "What this Governor is trying to do is take the wind out of the sails of Ward Connerly" (Selingo, 1999b).

[6] See Appendix B for a list of the nineteen required credits.

Only students with standard diplomas[7] can be considered for Talented 20 eligibility (One Florida, n.d.). Although Talented 20 is calculated without regard to SAT or ACT scores, each student must submit a score from one of these tests to be considered Talented 20 eligible.

Approximately one week before the governor announced the Talented 20 program, the chancellor of Florida's SUS, Adam W. Herbert, Jr., notified the Board of Regents[8] and the system's presidents about the plan (Selingo, 1999a). At the Board of Regents meeting on November 16, 1999, the chancellor endorsed the Talented 20 program and created a systemwide implementation task force to develop the details and provide implementation recommendations for the undergraduate portion of the plan.

The Talented 20 program provides an additional means for public high school students to gain admission into the SUS. It was added to the existing Board of Regents admissions policy, which states that students are eligible for admission into the SUS 1) with a "B" average in nineteen required school academic units (same nineteen required for admission under the Talented 20 policy); or 2) with a combination of high school GPA and admissions test scores on a sliding scale if their GPA is less than a "B" average (see Appendix C). Students who meet these existing minimum criteria are "SUS eligible," but they are not guaranteed admission into the SUS unless they also fall into the Talented 20 pool. Once students become SUS eligible, they must then compete for admission to particular institutions, which often have additional criteria and performance standards (Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, p. 7).

In addition to the traditional admissions process and the Talented 20 process, high school students can gain admission to an SUS institution through another pathway: profile assessment (formerly known as "alternative admissions"). Broadly, this admissions rule indicates that up to 10 percent of the annual SUS first-time-in-college students may be admitted into the system through profile assessment. Under this policy, applicants are assessed based on a combination of several factors in addition to their standardized test scores and grade point averages. These include "family educational background, socioeconomic status, graduate of a low performing high school, international baccalaureate program graduate, geographic location and special talents." The additional factors, however, cannot include race, national origin, or gender (Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, pp. 10-11).

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[7] Students graduating from Florida public high schools also receive special diplomas, standard certificates of completion, and special certificates of completion. None of these allow students to be considered in the Talented 20 pool. The standard diploma requires 24 credits for graduation in grades 9-12 with a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 2.0 or above; state minimum performance standards and passing of either the High School Competency Test (HSCT) or a qualifying score on the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), and the completion of a community service project. A certificate of completion (not a high school diploma) is awarded to students who met all requirements for graduation with the exception of passing of the state's required exams or meeting the GPA requirement. A special diploma and/or special certificate of completion are available for exceptional, properly classified students (Miami-Dade County Public Schools, n.d.).

[8] The Board of Regents served as the governing board of the State University System while the Talented 20 plan was originally being discussed and implemented. In 2001 it was replaced with a new Board of Education that oversees K-20 education in Florida (Wasson, 2001).

The significant change for SUS institutions under the Talented 20 policy is that, for the first time, in addition to not being permitted to consider race, ethnicity, or gender as factors in admission, students meeting the designated Talented 20 criteria would be "guaranteed" admission into the SUS. It is important to note, however, that although students in the top 20 percent of their high school are guaranteed admission into the State University System, they are not guaranteed admission into the institution of their choice. Once any institution accepts a Talented 20 student, the guarantee is considered met. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that the Talented 20 policy only applies to students in Florida's public high schools who have received standard diplomas.

Upon announcing the Talented 20 policy, Governor Bush indicated that it would accomplish many objectives that were not being achieved in education. He promised that the Talented 20 plan would guarantee admission to one of the state universities to the Top 20 percent of each graduating public high school class (assuming completion of the 19 required credits) without regard to SAT or ACT scores. Furthermore, he promised that this policy would increase diversity in Florida's public universities and, in particular, would admit approximately 400 additional minority students who met the Talented 20 criteria into the SUS (Cooper, 1999). The governor also indicated that 800 additional minority students would be admitted into the SUS "if they can complete missing threshold credits prior to admission." To address this deficit, then-chancellor Herbert indicated that the state would partner with high schools or allow students to take the needed courses in college (Selingo, 1999a).[9]

The governor promised that his Talented 20 policy would make higher education accessible to many high-performing students who would ordinarily not be offered admission into the SUS. Specifically, minority students from low-performing high schools would now be admitted to universities in the state system that previously would have rejected them due to low test scores and/or grades (Selingo, 1999a). Moreover, the policy would make students attending low-performing schools or majority-minority schools see improved chances for admission into the SUS, thereby encouraging more minority students to prepare themselves for college admission. The rationale was that public school students, motivated by the new program, would alter the types of courses they took so as to become Talented 20 eligible. The idea was that this would increase the pool of qualified candidates and, ultimately, increase the number of minority college graduates (Bush, 1999).

Governor Bush promised to increase need-based financial aid by $20-million (43 percent more than the previous year), with Talented 20 students being given priority for this aid (Selingo, 1999a; Talented 20 Report of the Implementation Task Force, n.d.). Further funding was also to be provided for the SUS to accommodate the additional students who would be admitted under the Talented 20 plan (Selingo, 1999b), and to provide more opportunities for students in Florida's lowest-performing high schools to take advanced classes, prepare for standardized tests, and pay for college.

In sum, Governor Bush promised that the Talented 20 plan would increase higher education access for underrepresented students and increase the diversity of the State University System. Furthermore, he promised to provide funds to support these goals.

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[9] This initiative was never implemented (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003).

Context: The State of Florida and Its Education System

To have a better understanding of the results of the Talented 20 Program, we begin with a brief discussion of the realities of the state of Florida, its public education system, and its State University System of colleges and universities. This context will highlight the long-term trends in Florida and also note inequalities that influence the impact of the implementation of the Talented 20 policy.[10]

The population of Florida, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, ranks fourth among the fifty states and is becoming increasingly diverse. Whites comprise 65 percent of Florida's population, Blacks 15 percent, Asians 2 percent, and Hispanics 17 percent (with 5.2 percent of that group identifying as Cuban).[11] Compared to 1990, the minority population grew while the White population share fell from 73 percent. This trend is projected to continue. (2000 U.S. Census).

Florida's public school population, like the nation's, is less White than the population of the state because the younger generation has a higher proportion of Hispanics and Blacks, and many elderly Whites come to Florida to retire. In the fall of 2001 there were almost 2.5 million public school students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve. Of those students, barely half (51 percent) are White, 25 percent Black, 20 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian, 0.2 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2 percent multiracial (Department of Education, n.d.c). In total, over 45 percent of the total number of students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade are Black, Hispanic, or Native American,[12] the groups generally targeted for race-conscious affirmative action (Department of Education, 2001a).

Florida's diverse student population has been increasing over time. Between the 1991-1992 and 2000-2001 school years, public school enrollment increased by 503,685 students, or 26.1 percent. Among racial/ethnic groups, the largest increases occurred for Hispanics, up 216,250, and Blacks, up 136,663 students (Department of Education, 2001b), together accounting for 70 percent of the enrollment increase.

Among 15-19 year olds, the 2000 Census showed that the White share decreased by 8.2 percent since 1990, while the Black percentage of the population increased slightly and the Hispanic share increased by almost 5 percent (see Table 1).

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[10] For a more detailed examination of these issues, see (Horn & Flores, 2003).

[11] While recognizing the difficulty in representing racial and ethnic groups using broad terminology, in order to maintain consistency with our data sources we use the terms they report (Asian, Black, Hispanic, White).

[12] Because of a desire to accurately portray proportional changes and the small sample size of the population, the authors of this paper have chosen to omit Native Americans from the tables and from discussion. However, it is done with the understanding that Native American populations deserve further, more specific qualitative analysis to understand how these policies impact their educational opportunities.

Table 1. Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Florida 15-19 Year Olds, 1990 & 2000

	1990	2000
Asian	1.7	1.9
Black	19.8	21.1
Hispanic	14.6	19.4
White	63.5	55.3

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Observing these trends over a longer period, Florida witnessed a huge growth in the minority student population from 1976 to 1999. During this time period, there was a 54.5 percent increase in the overall student population, with the greatest gains occurring in the Hispanic population. During this same period, the percentage of White students in kindergarten through twelfth grade decreased from 70.1 to 53.7 percent (Department of Education, 2001c). These trends are very important to the state's colleges.

These student population changes occurred as the state's major districts were moving backward from substantial desegregation efforts achieved in the 1970s. For example, in 1980 the average Black student was in a school that was 51 percent White, but by 2000 the average Black student was in a school that was only 35.4 percent White. The average Hispanic student was in a 35.3 percent White school in 1980, but by 2000 was in a 32.7 percent White school. Florida was among the top ten most segregated states for Hispanics on three measures of segregation in 2000 (Frankenberg, Lee, & Orfield, 2003). Segregation by race is strongly associated with concentrated poverty and many forms of school inequality, creating serious problems of unequal opportunity in preparation for college. Ironically, the Talented 20 program relies on school segregation to admit diverse students into the SUS.

Clearly, the demographics of the state are changing, which will have an enormous effect on the entire educational pipeline and, ultimately, on the students admitted into the SUS. To keep college equally accessible to Florida's population, the proportion of minority students admitted to the SUS should rise significantly each year, based simply on natural demographic changes. Thus, in analyzing the success of a plan intended to replace affirmative action, it is incorrect to concentrate on getting back to the starting point in terms of minority numbers.

Enrollment for fall 2001 at Florida's public high schools ranged from a high of 248,720 in the ninth grade, to a low of 130,563 in the twelfth grade (Department of Education, 2001a). This is a pattern of piling up students retained in the ninth grade and shrinkage of the senior year cohort that is characteristic of states with high-stakes exit tests (Haney, 2001). Florida was one of the nation's first states to implement such a test, which was temporarily suspended by federal court in the *Debra P.* case (1979/1981/1983/1984), which recognized the unequal opportunities that had existed in Florida's segregated schools. Florida's Department of Education lists the 2000-2001[13] graduation rate as 63.8 percent, suggesting that 36.2 percent of that class did not graduate

[13] "The percentage of students who have graduated within four years of entering ninth grade for the first time" (Department of Education, n.d.a).

with their peers, although Florida reports a dropout rate[14] of only 3.8 percent (Department of Education, n.d.c).

Since there is no nationally mandated methodology for the calculation of dropout rates, states are free to calculate them in any way they choose, often doing so in ways that severely underestimate the magnitude of the problem (Wingless, Marker, Henderson, Young, & Hoffman, 2000). Table 2 emphasizes this point, showing differences in graduation rates by race/ethnicity. In 2000-2001, Whites graduated at a rate of 71.2 percent and Asians graduated at a rate of 77.5. These rates are higher than those of Black and Hispanic students, with Blacks graduating at a rate of 51.9 percent and Hispanics at a rate of 56.0 percent. Thus, Florida loses nearly half of its Black and Hispanic students, and an unusually high percentage of its White students, before graduation. This means that the One Florida discussion began with a focus on access for high school graduates with almost half of the Black and Hispanic students missing.

Table 2. Florida Graduation Rate, by Race/Ethnicity, 2000-2001

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Graduation Rate (%)	77.5	51.9	56.0	71.2

Source: Florida Department of Education, Education Information & Accountability Services.

Of the 111,112 diplomas awarded to public high school graduates during the 2000-2001 school year, 106,407 students received standard diplomas and 4,705 received special diplomas. Districts awarded 4,765 students certificates of completion, and 133 students special certificates of completion. Based on fall 2001 enrollment numbers for the twelfth grade, 14,553 students, or 11 percent, were not awarded any diploma or certificate. Table 11 shows diplomas and certificates awarded in the 2000-2001 academic year by racial/ethnic category (Department of Education, 2001a). Since only students with standard diplomas can be considered for Talented 20 eligibility, this information is significant. For those applying to college for fall 2001, 95.0 percent of Whites and 95.9 percent of Asians received standard diplomas, but only 83.9 percent of Blacks and 89.9 percent of Hispanics did so. Therefore, not only is the percentage of White and Asian graduates larger than that of Black and Hispanic graduates (Table 2), but, of those graduating, White and Asian students rarely receive a diploma that does not count in terms of the criteria of the Talented 20 program (Table 3).

[14] "The percentage calculated by dividing (a) the number of students in grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason was reported by (b) the year's total enrollment for grades 9-12" (Department of Education, n.d.a).

Table 3. Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Diplomas/Certificates Awarded, 2000-2001

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Standard Diplomas	95.9	83.9	89.9	95.0
Special Diplomas	1.0	7.3	3.3	3.2
Standard Certificates of Completion	3.0	8.6	6.7	1.7
Special Certificates of Completion	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Florida Department of Education, Education Information & Accountability Services.

Contributing to the existing inequities, the public high schools that students graduate from in Florida are quite different from one another. According to a statement made by former Chancellor Herbert to the Board of Regents in 1999 shortly after the governor announced his One Florida Initiative:

> ...students in Florida's high schools graded[15] A and B are four times more likely to enroll in Advanced Placement English courses than students in D and F schools. They are five times more likely to enroll in AP math courses. Twenty-five counties offer no Advanced Placement courses at all. In Florida's A and B schools, 92 percent of the students took the Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT). In D and F schools, only 21 percent took the PSAT. The annual dropout rate in A and B high schools is only 1 percent, compared to 5.6 percent in D and F schools. In A and B high schools 67 percent of students pass the reading component of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, compared to a passage rate of 27 percent in D and F schools (Herbert, 1999, p. 3).

In an on-campus interview in January 2001, University of Florida Associate Provost Carl Barfield recalled that one night his young son told him that One Florida "won't work" because "all high schools are not equal," (personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001). This is, of course, one of the underlying realities facing the Talented 20 program.

These differences among the high schools will clearly produce students with different levels of college preparation and readiness. Although initiatives have been put in place in Florida to address these issues in K-12 education, similar initiatives since the standards-based reform movement in the early 1980s have never made segregated high-poverty schools equal on any large scale, and the addition of exit tests tend to raise dropout rates (Orfield & Kornhaber, 2001).

Similar to Florida's public elementary and secondary schools, the institutions that comprise Florida's State University System are not equal, ranging in their selectivity, reputation, and available resources. For example, the University of Florida (UF), considered the premier

[15] "School grades for 2001-2002 utilize a point system. Schools are awarded one point for each percent of students who score high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains" (Department of Education, n.d.b). Based on the number of points awarded, a school gets a grade of A through F.

institution of the SUS, is very selective compared to other institutions in the system, accepting 60 percent of its applicants and drawing applicants with strong grades and test scores ("Peterson's," 2003), while other institutions in the system could be described as "open enrollment" institutions, admitting most of their applicants (up to a high of 82 percent). Yet, although UF is considered selective in Florida, it is not considered selective when compared to leading flagship institutions across the country (such as UCLA), or institutions that draw from a national pool of students (such as the University of Michigan or the University of California at Berkeley).

In recent years, SUS institutions have been allowed to increase their enrollment caps and, therefore, enrollment of new first-time-in-college students. In 1993-1994 there were over 17,000 first-time-in-college students enrolled in the SUS. In 2001-2002 that number increased to over 32,000.

While the SUS is racially and ethnically diverse, this diversity is not evenly distributed within the system (see Table 4).

Table 4. Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Total SUS First-Time-in-College Enrollment, by Institution, 2001-2002

Institution	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Percent of Total
UF	28.1	7.9	14.3	22.6	18.8
FSU	10.2	11.9	14.9	20.4	17.3
FAMU	0.4	39.8	0.4	0.1	7.0
USF	15.8	11.7	10.2	14.3	13.3
FAU	6.6	8.1	6.8	7.4	7.4
UWF	2.8	2.0	0.9	3.3	2.8
UCF	17.4	8.7	12.6	18.5	15.9
FIU	11.3	7.0	37.1	3.2	9.6
UNF	6.6	2.6	2.0	7.2	5.6
FGCU	0.8	0.5	1.0	2.6	1.9
Total	99.9	100.2	100.2	99.6	99.8

Note: NCF is not included because it did not exist when the Talented 20 plan was implemented.
Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

In 2001-2002, UF students represented 18.8 percent of first-time-in-college enrollment in the SUS; this group included 28.1 percent of Asian and 22.6 percent of White students, which represented the largest percentage of both groups on any SUS campus. On the other hand, only 7.9 percent of Blacks and 14.3 percent of Hispanics in the system were enrolled at UF. While FAMU, Florida's historically Black university, comprises only 7.0 percent of the SUS enrollment, 39.8 percent of Blacks enrolled there in 2001-2002. This is one of the less selective campuses in the system, and the only campus that is allowed by law to provide a remedial program. Similarly, while FIU, Florida's predominantly Hispanic institution, represents only 9.6 percent of the SUS first-time-in-college population, 37.1 percent of Hispanics enrolled there. The Talented 20 Program, therefore, was implemented in a public higher education system that already had clear differences as to where students of different racial groups actually enrolled.

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Claims regarding the diversity of the SUS often fail to address the way students are stratified by race among its campuses. This is significant, because a research university often offers a very different set of educational and future life opportunities than an open-access campus. The fact that the Talented 20 plan provided access only to the SUS, not to its most desirable campuses, meant that it would not remedy these inequalities.

The disparities within Florida's education system have also been documented by the U.S. Department of Education. In fact, the One Florida Initiative began just over a year after Florida entered into its agreement with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) to improve minority students' opportunities. As part of the agreement, "the state pledged to use alternative admissions measures at public universities at least through 2003. Officials at the time interpreted those measures to be affirmative action policies" (Selingo, 1999a, p. A36). These were obligations remaining to remedy the unconstitutional segregation of Florida's colleges.

OCR spokeswoman Erica Lepping indicated that OCR would monitor the Talented 20 Program to determine whether it met the intent of the Florida/OCR agreement (Selingo, 2000a). Then-chancellor Herbert believed that the governor's Equity in Higher Education plan would achieve several of the commitments made by the SUS in the agreement (Herbert, 1999), including continuing to support funding of the College Reach Out Program, which attracts low-income or educationally disadvantaged students in grades six through twelve to postsecondary education; continuing to support increased academic standards in K-12 education to ensure a more qualified applicant pool; using a "profile assessment" to consider additional factors in college admissions; and continuing to provide access for minority graduate and professional school students.[16]

Florida's basic trends point to increasing diversity in its state and student populations, as well as unequal opportunities and unequal outcomes for its public school students. The Talented 20 Program was implemented within this context.

Barriers Resulting from the Administration of the Talented 20 Program

To understand the context of the Talented 20 outcomes, it is important to examine the actual implementation of the plan itself. The Talented 20 Implementation Task Force, appointed by Chancellor Herbert, met in December 1999, and was asked to identify implementation questions, and ultimately guidelines, for the Talented 20 Program, the $20 million increase in funding to need-based financial aid programs, and the profile assessment criteria. In particular, the Task Force was asked to identify factors that could be considered in the profile assessment criteria for alternative admissions; to identify coordination processes for implementing the Talented 20 Program among the SUS institutions, high schools, districts, the Florida Department of Education, and the then-Chancellor's Office; and to consider an implementation plan that would occur in two phases, with initial implementation in the fall of 2000 and full implementation in the fall of 2001 Talented 20 (Implementation Task Force, n.d.). Not all of the group's recommendations were implemented and existing procedures have evolved even in the short time the program has existed.

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[16] The federal civil rights agency, however, did not mandate race-conscious admissions in Florida (former OCR Director, N. Cantu, personal communication with G. Orfield, February 1, 2003).

The actual administration of the Talented 20 program is decentralized. No one person or entity is responsible for the direct administration and daily management of the program, even though the Implementation Task Force encouraged the creation of a Talented 20 Program Office to serve as a central source of information about, assistance for, and evaluation of the program. Instead, a combination of departments and individuals that existed prior to the creation of the Talented 20 program is charged with the additional responsibilities associated with its implementation (M. Hayes, personal communication with E. Lee, February 25, 2002). In other words, a plan that relies in concept on complex coordination and collaboration among schools, campuses, and the university system has no core administrative structure.

For example, school districts are required to provide the Florida Department of Education with a list of students who are likely to be Talented 20 eligible. These districts determine how GPAs are calculated in order to determine the top 20 percent. For instance, some districts have chosen to weight honors and Advanced Placement courses by .5, while others have given these courses a weight of 1. It is important to note, however, that the GPAs calculated by the districts are not necessarily the same used for admissions decisions. Each SUS institution determines how it will calculate GPAs. Once the school districts provide the Department of Education (DOE) with this information, DOE staff review these lists and verify that these students have the required nineteen credits. The Division of Colleges and Universities verify that an SAT or ACT test score is on file (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003). The Commissioner of Education's office then notifies students in writing that they are Talented 20 eligible. They are only considered "eligible" until they successfully complete the nineteen required credits, submit an SAT or ACT score, and graduate from high school with a standard diploma. In sum, instead of creating a program office to handle these and other functions, the Talented 20 program responsibilities have been delegated to existing entities.

Overseeing the Talented 20 program is the One Florida Team, chaired by Monica Hayes. Since the One Florida Team is charged with overseeing the implementation of the entire One Florida Initiative, its primary focus is not the Talented 20 program but all issues of equity in education, business contracting, and hiring. The team's main function with regard to the Talented 20 program is to address any complications that may arise and recommend changes to remedy them. Generally, the team seeks approval of its recommendations from the Board of Education if the recommendations would lead to fundamental and significant changes to the program (M. Hayes, personal communication with E. Lee, February 25, 2002). This approval process has yet to be utilized since mainly minor adjustments have been made (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003).

It is important to emphasize that the team's main responsibility is not to coordinate or monitor the daily functions of the Talented 20 program. As noted earlier, various program responsibilities fall on a group of existing entities. This approach is decentralized and open to input, but may actually lead to a lack of accountability, since no single entity will be responsible for the program's overall operations.

College admissions through the Talented 20 program entail only minor changes to the existing admissions process. Juniors who demonstrate the potential to qualify for the Talented 20 program now receive a letter in the spring notifying them of their status in the top *30* percent of

their class and explaining the program. After the posting of seventh-semester grades (senior year), students scheduled to graduate in the top 20 percent of their class receive an eligibility letter in February, a follow-up to the letter they received as juniors (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003). This comes relatively late in the admissions process. High school and eighth grade students receive information about the Talented 20 program as a way to encourage students to begin setting goals for high school and to help them understand early on that they will be rewarded for hard work in school (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003). As described by Monica Hayes, chairperson of the One Florida Team, "This program is really designed to motivate students who might not have thought about going to college" (personal communication, S. Flores, January 30, 2003).

When students decide to apply to college, they typically meet with a school guidance counselor. The guidance counselors are instructed to work with students who are potentially Talented 20 eligible, and to identify SUS institutions at which their chance of admission is high. Guidance counselors learn about the college admissions processes and criteria through admissions matrices and conferences with college admissions officers. For example, in 2001, admissions officers from SUS institutions conducted an admissions tour around the state in order to speak with guidance counselors about the college admissions process. In addition to these sources of information, guidance counselors can request college admissions officers to conduct a courtesy review of a student's application in order to obtain feedback about a student's prospect of being admitted to their particular institution (M. Hayes, personal communication with E. Lee, February 25, 2002).

In order for a student to get assistance with the Talented 20 admissions guarantee, he or she must have applied to, and been rejected from, three SUS institutions. It is important to emphasize that the Talented 20 program only guarantees admission to the SUS system, but not to a specific institution. Students must pay all of the application fees unless a waiver is granted. Since there is no single application for the entire system, students are required to send separate applications to each school. There is no coordination of these efforts. Any claim to Talented 20 rights would come very late in the application process, and would not guarantee admission to the campus the student desired or even was willing to attend.

The Talented 20 process for guaranteeing admissions is informal and unstructured. In order to exercise the guarantee, a student is to work with their guidance counselor to identify additional institutions to which the student is likely to be admitted. Once institutions are identified, guidance counselors request admission officers to review the student's application. If the review is favorable, the student applies to the school. If students are not admitted to any school even after seeking the assistance of their guidance counselor, they then notify Monica Hayes, Director of the Office of Equity and Access (M. Hayes, personal communication with E. Lee, February 25, 2002).

Since the inception of the Talented 20 program, Monica Hayes has had to assist students who had been denied admission to the SUS. However, there is no formal attempt made to quantify the number of students assisted (M Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003). In addition, there is no mechanism to accurately monitor the number of students who do not understand how to exercise the guarantee. In fact, it may be possible that some students were

unfamiliar with the process or their right to seek it. Since the program does not have an office or a designated individual to monitor and contact students who are not admitted to any of the SUS institutions to which they apply, students are left on their own to determine how to exercise the guarantee, to document what happened to them, and to go to the state committee. There is no formal procedure for someone to follow-up with them. In addition, even if a student understands how to exercise the guarantee, by the time they attempt to do so, the entering class may be filled on the campus they want to attend. As a result, students may not be admitted to the best school for which they are qualified, but instead be admitted to any school that has spots remaining.

While providing students with an admissions "guarantee" may seem like a way to expand access, providing financial support is critical to making it more of a reality. Procedures in the Florida Student Assistance Grant Procedural Guide indicate that Talented 20 students "receive priority consideration for FSAG funding at a state university" (2001, p. 11). It is assumed that students will seek the assistance of their guidance counselors in cases where financial need is not met. Guidance counselors are to work with college financial aid officials in order to try to obtain a suitable financial aid package. If the Talented 20 student still contends that his or her full need is not being met, they can petition the One Florida Team Chairperson, Monica Hayes, who could then work with the student and the SUS institution to resolve the situation (M. Hayes, personal communication with E. Lee, February 25, 2002). Once again, the student must go through various steps to have their situation addressed.

Overall, the Talented 20 program faces several administration challenges that impede its ability to help students enroll in the SUS system. The program's decentralized system of administration reduces accountability. The program's lack of formal processes gives students and counselors little guidance as to how to ensure that students can exercise their admissions guarantees or receive priority with regard to financial aid. Furthermore, students attending poorly resourced schools are likely to be the most disadvantaged since guidance counselors' resources will likely be strained. Without clear structural changes to the implementation of the Talented 20 program, the program will continue to reinforce inequalities that it is intended to alleviate. As such, in its current form, the Talented 20 program will likely continue to disproportionately support Whites and Asians (see "context" section).

Ultimately, while the Talented 20 program is designed to guarantee admission, there is little evidence that, through its administration, it has done anything to change the admissions prospects for Florida public high school students. While the program may be a source of motivation, and the Equity in Education initiatives may be addressing problems in K-12 education (M. Hayes, personal communication with P. Marin, February 4, 2003), the Talented 20 program does not change students' potential to be accepted by SUS institutions, especially since they are not guaranteed admission to the university of their choice.

The Talented 20 Policy: The Numbers Tell a Different Story

In August 2000, only one month after the Talented 20 program was officially upheld by a Florida administrative law judge, the governor released admissions statistics for the entering class of fall 2000 and announced that the Talented 20 policy was a success. Since the policy had been legally in effect for less than two months and the great majority of the admissions decisions had been

made before its implementation, this pronouncement seemed a bit premature. Nevertheless, Governor Bush announced that the new policy provided a 12 percent increase in the number of minority freshmen enrolled in the SUS for fall 2000. Initial figures indicated that 556 more Black students enrolled in fall 2000 than fall 1999, representing an 11 percent increase. Hispanic representation increased by 317 students, nearly 8 percent. Black enrollment increased by 33 percent and Hispanic enrollment increased by 19 percent at the University of Florida, and by 21 percent and 24 percent, respectively, at Florida State University, the two institutions whose enrollments were expected to suffer most (Selingo, 2000d). The statistics shared at that time, however, were not the eventual "final enrollment" [17] numbers currently listed by the SUS, nor did the statistics specify how many of these students were admitted specifically because of the Talented 20 policy. Furthermore, the data presented did not discuss the growth in total enrollment of first-time-in-college students as enrollment caps were raised, and also did not reflect the racially changing population of high school graduates.

Our analysis of the eligibility policies and the statistics from Florida's schools and colleges, as well as our campus interviews, shows a very different picture. First, very few students in the Talented 20 needed this policy to gain admission to the SUS. In other words, it made few additional students eligible for admissions. Second, there were no affirmative action admissions policies to dismantle at the great majority of campuses. Our campus visits showed that Florida State University had already decided to end its affirmative action program before the policy change. In addition, the University of North Florida, FAMU, and Florida International University, also had no race-conscious affirmative action in admissions so any assumption about measuring a system-wide policy change was simply wrong (Bush, 2000). Furthermore, the Talented 20 information came too late in the admissions process to make any significant difference to institutional decisions.

In this section, we examine how many students became eligible for admission who would not have been eligible otherwise, consider the data that existed at the time the plan was adopted that showed that its requirements would be more favorable to Whites and Asians than Blacks and Hispanics, and document the ways in which the educational pipeline in Florida filters out growing shares of the potential minority collegians as they pass through its requirements and barriers.

A basic issue that affects the plan's impact is the number of students who are "newly eligible" under the plan. That is, how many students would not have gained access to the SUS without the Talented 20 plan? According to the governor's original announcement, 400 new minority students would gain admission into the SUS due to the new policy (Cooper, 1999).

What Does the Talented 20 Contribute to the College Eligible Pool?

The overwhelming majority of students designated as Talented 20 in 2000 and 2001 did not need the designation in order to gain admissions to a state college or university. Only 150 in the 2000 freshman class and 177 in 2001 who were designated Talented 20 and had a high school grade

[17] Preliminary enrollment data, because it is extracted in early fall, tends to be higher than final enrollment data, generally released after the first semester of the academic year. We use the "final" numbers in our analysis for this report as they represent a more accurate picture of the SUS and the results of the Talented 20 policy.

point average (GPA) below 3.0 (see Tables 5 and 6). While having the required nineteen credits and a GPA above a 3.0 does not guarantee admissions in the SUS, current admission patterns, as well as minimum entry criteria defined by the Florida Board of Education, suggest that almost all students with these credentials could gain admission to at least one SUS institution without the assistance of the Talented 20 program.[18] Further, since the "guarantee" of the Talented 20 program provides almost the same admissions opportunities as the minimum SUS eligibility rules (admission into one SUS institution, but not necessarily the one of choice), it is not providing anything new to the students in the Talented 20 pool who already meet SUS minimum eligibility requirements. Hence, among Talented 20 students, fewer than one percent were likely to need their guarantees in order to gain admissions into the SUS. Viewed another way, the program was not likely to help more than a handful of the more than 20,000 students in the Talented 20 pool to gain admission to the SUS system in both 2000 and 2001. Moreover, since students with GPAs lower than 3.0 can also gain admission via the "sliding scale" or profile assessment components of the normal SUS admissions policy, these low numbers of newly eligible students probably include some who could have been admitted anyway. In addition, these numbers of newly eligible Talented 20 students include Whites. The maximum potential gain for diversity, therefore, was much less than half of the 400 additional minority students the governor indicated the policy would assist in the first year. In addition, it was a year in which enrollment caps on some institutions, including the University of Florida and Florida State University, were raised, so there were substantially more total spaces for the new students, a key factor in the announced "gains" at these two institutions. The real impact of Florida's percent plan was negligible, demonstrating a change of fewer than 150 Black and Hispanic students in a state of more than 15 million people.

Table 5: Number of Talented 20 Eligible Students, by Race/Ethnicity, and GPA (Fall 2000)

	GPA >= 3.0	"Newly Eligible" (GPA < 3.0)[a]	Total
Asian	1,289	2	1,291
Black	2,711	104	2,815
Hispanic	2,976	16	2,992
White	15,233	27	15,260
Native American	55	0	55
Multiracial	101	1	102
Total	22,365	150	22,515

[a] *This data does not indicate whether or not these students submitted the required SAT/ACT scores. Thus, this is likely an overestimate of "newly eligible" students.*

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

[18] In addition to being in the top 20 percent of a graduating class and completing the necessary nineteen required courses, students must also take the SAT or ACT test. For purposes of this analysis, all students in the top 20 percent and with the required nineteen courses are assumed to have taken one of these standardized tests. Therefore, these are likely overestimates.

Table 6: Number of Talented 20 Eligible Students, by Race/Ethnicity, and GPA (Fall 2001)

	GPA >= 3.0	"Newly Eligible" (GPA < 3.0)[a]	Total
Asian	1,164	5	1,169
Black	2,535	110	2,645
Hispanic	3,141	17	3,158
White	14,801	44	14,845
Native American	58	0	58
Multiracial	113	1	114
Total	21,812	177	21,989

[a] *This data does not indicate whether or not these students submitted the required SAT/ACT scores. Thus, this is likely an overestimate of "newly eligible" students.*

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Realities Before the Implementation of the Talented 20 Program

The potential success of the Talented 20 program is based, in part, on the eligible pool of students. Eligibility data from 1998, provide a snap shot of Florida's situation shortly before the policy was adopted.

The Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis of Florida's Division of Colleges and Universities hypothesized Talented 20 outcomes based on 1997-1998 public high school completers. As indicated in Table 7, 21.3 percent of all public high school graduates in 1998 were Black and 14.4 percent were Hispanic. However, Black students made up only 9.4 percent and Hispanic students only 9.6 percent of all students who would have met eligibility criteria for the Talented 20 program. In contrast, White students constituted 61.2 percent of graduating high school students and would have made up 74.5 percent of all Talented 20 students. Simply looking at credit completion, not top 20 percent standing or whether the required SAT/ACT exams were taken, data indicate that only 57.6 percent of all high school completers had taken the nineteen credits required for Talented 20 eligibility (Table 8). Examining this information by race, only 42.9 percent of Black completers and 40.5 percent of Hispanic completers had these credits, while 74.7 percent of Asians and 65.9 percent of Whites did. In other words, data available before, the development of the Talented 20 Program indicated that the policy would disproportionately benefit White and Asian students. It is important to note that, since only those with standard diplomas can be Talented 20 eligible, this data, which includes high school completers who received standard, special education, and GED diplomas, likely underestimates the inequities present. It was clearly wrong to characterize the program, as a minority opportunity program since the vast majority of Talented 20 students were destined to be White under the standards chosen.

Table 7. Racial/Ethnic Distribution of All Completers[1] and Talented 20 Eligible Completers (Public High School Graduates, 1997-1998)

	High School Completers (%)	Talented 20 Eligible (%)
Asian	2.8	6.0
Black	21.3	9.4
Hispanic	14.4	9.6
White	61.2	74.5
Native American	0.2	0.2
Not Reported	0.2	0.3
Total	100.1	100.0

[1] Includes 95,958 standard, 2,729 special education, and 1,541 GED diplomas.
Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Table 8: Percent of all High School Completers with the 19 Academic Credits Necessary for Talented 20 Eligibility, by Race/Ethnicity (Public High School Graduates, 1997-1998)

	Percent Completers with 19 Academic Credits
Asian	74.7
Black	42.9
Hispanic	40.5
White	65.9
Overall	57.6

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

If the policy had been implemented for 1997-1998 completers, only 7.2 of Black completers and 10.8 percent of Hispanic completers would have been Talented 20 eligible, compared to 19.7 percent of Whites and 35.1 percent of Asians (Table 9). The Talented 20 program, therefore, would largely benefit White and Asian high school completers. Prior to the implementation of the program, data showed that the policy would not provide admissions guarantees at equal rates to students of different races and ethnicities in the top 20 percent of their high school graduating classes.

Table 9. Percent Meeting Talented 20 Eligibility Requirements, by Race/Ethnicity (Public High School Graduates, 1997-1998)

	Percent of High School Completers Meeting Talented 20 Eligibility Requirements
Asian	35.1
Black	7.2
Hispanic	10.8
White	19.7

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Problems with the Talented 20 Pipeline

To fully understand the potential impact of the Talented 20 policy, one needs to begin before enrollment – with the application process. Not all students designated as Talented 20 chose to apply to an SUS institution. Only 71.6 percent of all Talented 20 students applied to an SUS institution in the fall of 2000 (see Table 10). In this group, 77.1 percent of Blacks applied to an SUS institution, 80.2 percent of Asians (at the highest rate), and 70.8 percent of Hispanics, one of the lowest rates. In 2001, application rates declined even further, with only 67.1 percent of Talented 20 students applying to SUS schools (see Table 10). Declines in application rates were most significant among Black and Hispanic students, approximately seven percentage points each, a trend that undermines the vision of the program as a motivator for increased college attendance.

Table 10. Percent of Talented 20 Eligible Students Applying to an SUS Institution, by Race/Ethnicity, in 2000 & 2001

	2000	2001
Asian	80.2	77.1
Black	77.1	69.8
Hispanic	70.8	64.3
White	70.0	66.4
Overall	71.6	67.1

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Additionally, the *number* of Talented 20 students who applied to the SUS decreased by 8.6 percent from 2000 to 2001[19] (Table 11). The number of Black Talented 20 applicants declined the most in the system, by 15.0 percent overall, with the largest decline at the University of Florida (16.7 percent). Overall, declines in Talented 20 applicants were more modest among

[19] These calculations are different from those used for Table 10. Table 10 represents the share of Talented 20 students who applied each year. Table 11 represents the percent change in the number of applicants.

Hispanics and Whites, with the number of Hispanic applicants declining by 4.2 percent and the number of White applicants declining by 7.8 percent.

Table 11. Percent Difference in Applications from Talented 20 Eligible Students, by Race/Ethnicity, by Institution, 2000-2001

	UF	FSU	FAMU	USF	FAU	UWF	UCF	FIU	UNF	FGCU	SUS
Asian	-4.2	2.2	0.3	0.8	1.9	0.9	5.6	-1.8	-0.6	0.2	-13.0
Black	-16.7	-3.4	1.0	1.3	2.5	1.9	0.6	-4.6	1.5	0.8	-15.0
Hispanic	-5.7	3.7	0.5	5.0	2.3	0.6	3.9	-6.3	1.6	0.3	-4.2
White	-8.0	2.3	0.0	2.7	1.4	0.8	0.5	-0.2	2.2	0.4	-7.8
Overall	-8.6	1.7	0.2	2.7	1.7	0.9	1.4	-1.6	1.8	0.5	-8.6

Note: NCF is not included because it did not exist when the Talented 20 plan was implemented.
Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Although the Talented 20 program is intended to provide an admissions guarantee to the SUS for all eligible students, not all applicants were admitted into an SUS institution. Of course, this is due, in part, to the fact that students may not necessarily be admitted into the institution of their choice. Of the eligible Talented 20 students who applied to an SUS institution in 2000, 95.5 percent were accepted, while only 81.9 percent were accepted in 2001 (Table 12). Among Black Talented 20 applicants in 2000, 92.5 percent were accepted to an SUS institution, while only 79.1 percent were accepted in 2001. Similarly, 95.3 percent of Hispanic applicants were accepted in 2000, and 72.1 percent in 2001. In 2000, 96.2 percent of White applicants and 95.4 percent of Asian applicants were accepted, but only 84.1 percent and 85.3 percent, respectively, were accepted in 2001. This points to a key weakness of the administration of the Talented 20 program, which has no central office to keep track of rejected students.

Table 12. Percent of Talented 20 Eligible Students *Accepted* to an SUS Institution, by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 & 2001

	2000	2001
Asian	95.4	85.3
Black	92.5	79.1
Hispanic	95.3	72.1
White	96.2	84.1
Overall	95.5	81.9

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

On average, Talented 20 eligible students applied to approximately 1.4 schools, with most students applying to only one school. While students' desires to attend only one specific institution and growing admissions competition may partially account for the declining acceptance rates, it is important to consider whether students had the information they needed to exercise their Talented 20 guarantees. Since the program is relatively new, guidelines and procedures may not be well understood by students and guidance counselors. If the burden of

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exercising the guarantee falls to students and their high schools, one might expect different acceptance rates for different racial groups – as demonstrated above – since Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to attend high schools that have fewer resources than high schools attended by Asian and White students.

While most Talented 20 students who were admitted chose to attend an SUS institution, it is important to note that these students represent only about half of *all* students in the Talented 20 pool. Overall, 89.5 percent of accepted students chose to enroll in the SUS in 2001. This reflected an increase from 74.9 percent in 2000 (Table 13).

Of all the students in the entire Talented 20 pool, fewer than half actually enrolled in the SUS in 2001 (Table 13). Only 43.1 percent of eligible Hispanics and 49.4 percent of eligible Blacks enrolled in the system.

Table 13. Percent of Talented 20 Students *Enrolling* in a SUS Institution, by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 & 2001

	Percent of *Accepted* Talented 20 Applicants Enrolling in the SUS		**Percent of *All* Talented 20 Eligible Students Enrolling in the SUS**	
	2000	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**
Asian	72.7	83.0	55.6	54.6
Black	75.9	89.5	54.1	49.4
Hispanic	70.3	92.8	47.5	43.1
White	75.8	89.5	51.1	50.0
Overall	74.9	89.5	51.3	49.2

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Data from the Board of Education's Division of Colleges and Universities clearly demonstrate that the Talented 20 policy is not yielding equitable results for all of Florida's students. Simply admitting fewer than 200 "newly eligible" students, as was done in each of the programs first two years, will not significantly affect student access or the diversity of a system that admits over 30,000 first-time-in-college students each year and has more than 200,000 total students (Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, n.d.b). This number becomes even more meaningless when considering the fact that there are almost 120,000 seniors in Florida's public high schools.

What Happened at the Top-Tier Institutions of the SUS?

Immediately prior to the implementation of One Florida, affirmative action was a significant issue in Florida on only two campuses – the University of Florida and Florida State University. Both have been pointed to by supporters of the One Florida plan as exemplars of success under the new Talented 20 policy. In this portion of the report we briefly describe the role of the

Talented 20 policy on these two campuses relative to the role of racially targeted affirmative action in recruiting and supporting minority students.[20]

The University of Florida

The University of Florida was a relatively small, overwhelmingly male campus until the mid-twentieth century. As the population of Florida exploded, it became one of the nation's largest campuses by 2001, enrolling 46,515 students, including 40,499 from in-state. Overall, in 2001, 7.2 percent of the student population was Black and 9.6 percent Hispanic (Office of Public Relations, University of Florida, 2002).

The demand for admission to the state's premier campus has been spurred by the school's affordability, growing reputation, and the scholarship resources available for high-scoring students, whether or not they have any financial need.[21] Thus many Florida families face the alluring offer of a free education for their high-achieving children. More than 10,000 students applied for Early Action and Early Decisions for fall 2002, for example, and those selected tended to have high GPA and SAT scores (Office of Admissions, University of Florida, 2002). Since the Talented 20 policy provides no guarantee of enrollment at the University of Florida and there is a high demand for admission, admissions officers can admit who they want to, thus the plan had no automatic effect on the campus population. Because they could no longer use race as a factor in admissions, and yet still valued a diverse student body, the ban on affirmative action deeply worried university officials (Associated Press, 1999).

Prior to One Florida, the University of Florida had an affirmative action plan with a variety of outreach strategies, partially in response to the statewide plans required by the enforcement of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and a series of federal court orders mandating the federal Office for Civil Rights to require desegregation of southern systems of higher education (Newell, 1988). Upon the announcement of One Florida, University of Florida's President Young was quite vocal, articulating his concern about such a plan, predicting that it would decrease minority enrollment. In fact, analysis of UF's 1999 admissions data indicated that the Talented 20 program would likely cause a decline in the school's freshman minority enrollment (Associated Press, 1999). More importantly, President Young, who had experienced the end of affirmative action several years earlier as chancellor at UCLA, was concerned about the quality of education UF could provide as a result of such a decline in minority enrollment. "If you dramatically reduce diversity, you're going to reduce the quality of education for all of the students, minority and non-minority alike," Young said (Associated Press, 1999).

Under its existing affirmative action plan, the University of Florida had already admitted its fall 2000 class by the time the legal challenge to Governor Bush's initiative was settled (Csar, 2000). That year it experienced a substantial growth of minority students, which was included in the governor's report as if it were a result of the One Florida plan. However, this growth actually

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[20] Even though race could no longer be considered in admissions decisions, it could be considered in recruitment, retention, and financial aid policies.

[21] The Florida Bright Futures scholarship, providing free tuition and a stipend and available to all SUS students based on merit, went to a rapidly growing share of UF undergraduates. These scholarships went disproportionately to White students (Heller & Rasmussen, 2002).

reflected both the affirmative action policies and the increase in UF's enrollment cap. During the second year, when race-conscious affirmative action in admissions ended, there was a large decline in minority student enrollments, particularly for Black students. In fall 2002, the campus reported preliminary data showing a substantial recovery from the previous year's sharp loss, which President Young credited to very active outreach, recruitment, and support programs ("Lt. Governor Brogan," 2002).[22]

Though the Talented 20 program was expected to maintain diversity by spurring applications from students at minority schools, Talented 20 students applying to UF were overwhelmingly White. In 2000, 70.4 percent of applicants in the Talented 20 were White, rising to 72.9 percent in 2001 (Table 14). In other words, those in the Talented 20 category were even more unrepresentative of the state's college-age population than the overall applicant pool (Table 15).

Another important point about the Talented 20 program is that being able to apply and deciding to apply are two very different things, the second much more dependent on outreach and recruitment than the first. Black Talented 20 applicants decreased by 4.4 percent from 2000 to 2001, while Hispanic applicants rose slightly. Other elite campuses in other states have experienced a similar drop in Black applications when affirmative action ended (Horn & Flores, 2003).

Table 14. Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida Talented 20 Applications, 2000 & 2001

	2000	2001
Asian	7.6	8.9
Black	11.0	6.6
Hispanic	10.3	10.8
White	70.4	72.9
Native American	0.2	0.3
Mixed	0.4	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

[22] Final data for 2002 was not available prior to the release of this report.

Table 15: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida First-Time-in-College Applications, 1998-2001

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Asian	6.2	5.9	6.6	6.6
Black	8.5	10.3	10.8	10.2
Hispanic	10.8	12.2	12.1	12.7
White	69.9	67.2	65.8	65.8
Total (N)	18,935	20,849	21,034	19,010

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

The admission of Black first-time-in-college students has been increasing after 1998, but decreased in the second year of the Talented 20 program (Table 16). In 2000, 12.9 percent of first-time-in-college admits at UF were Black, but only 9.4 percent in 2001. A more drastic decline is observed in UF's admission rates of Black Talented 20 students, which decreased from 12.1 percent in 2000 to 6.3 percent in 2001 – a loss of almost half (Table 17). The proportion of first-time-in-college Hispanic admits has remained fairly constant over the last few years, with a 1 percent increase in the share of Hispanic Talented 20 admits. Asian Talented 20 students experienced an increase of almost two percentage points, and White Talented 20 students increased by almost three percentage points.

Table 16: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida First-Time-in-College Admissions Offers, 1998-2001

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Asian	7.3	6.7	7.0	7.4
Black	9.8	10.8	12.9	9.4
Hispanic	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.3
White	69.0	67.5	64.9	67.7
Total (N)	11,540	12,479	13,006	11,245

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Table 17: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida Talented 20 Admissions Offers, 2000 & 2001

	2000	2001
Asian	7.6	9.4
Black	12.1	6.3
Hispanic	10.1	11.1
White	69.6	72.3
Native American	0.2	0.3
Multiracial	0.4	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Enrollments fell more dramatically than admissions. Ultimately, the University of Florida saw a decrease in Black and Hispanic enrollment between the first two years of the Talented 20 policy – for both first-time-in-college students and Talented 20 students (Tables 18 and 19). White enrollment, however, increased by 6.0 percentage points for first-time-in-college students and 5.4 percentage points for Talented 20 students. The share of Black students in the entering class dropped from one-eighth to one-fourteenth of the total.

Table 18: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida First-Time-in-College Students, Summer/Fall Freshman Enrollment, 1998-2001

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Asian	7.3	6.6	7.4	7.3
Black	8.2	9.7	11.8	7.2
Hispanic	10.1	11.3	11.9	11.2
White	72.6	70.5	66.3	72.3
Total (N)	5,914	6,362	7,113	6,432

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Table 19: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of University of Florida Talented 20, Summer/Fall Enrollment, 2000 & 2001

	2000	2001
Asian	7.1	7.3
Black	11.0	6.4
Hispanic	10.0	9.0
White	71.2	76.6
Native American	0.2	0.3
Multiracial	0.4	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, Office of Planning, Budgeting and Policy Analysis

Prior to the implementation of the One Florida initiative, the University of Florida had a "long history of outreach programs designed to welcome diverse populations to [its] campus" (Wilder, Anderson, & Mickelberry, 2001, p. 11). It already had numerous initiatives in place to help recruit, fund, and retain minority students. Because the One Florida initiative only prohibits the use of race/ethnicity in admissions decisions, these race-conscious initiatives continued and more were added. For example, the university administers special programs to increase minority professionals in engineering and education and has a number of special minority scholarship programs (College of Engineering, University of Florida, 2000; College of Education, University of Florida, 2003a). The Office of the Vice Provost administers on-campus support programs, including the Cycles of Success Program, a minority retention program that provides academic and social assistance to students (Office of the Vice Provost, University of Florida, n.d.). The Office of Academic Support and Institutional Services (OASIS) supports minority students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of

Florida, 2001). Ultimately, the only part of affirmative action that has been dismantled at the university is explicit consideration of race in admissions decisions. The other parts have been strengthened, as at FSU (see next section).

After the governor's announcement of the One Florida Initiative in November 1999, UF began working on a plan that would respond to "race-neutral" policies in admissions. The president and the provost formed the Admissions Task Force in December 1999, calling on experts from UCLA, UC Berkeley, and UT Austin to talk about the tactics they had used to alleviate the decrease in minority enrollment at their universities. The Admissions Task Force began looking immediately at three areas. First, it examined the actual admissions process and added an essay component to the application. They also added an optional information section that asked students questions about extracurricular activities, work history, whether they were raised by a single parent, etc. The second thing they did was begin to improve recruitment, outreach, and yield. Finally, they formed a Campus Climate Committee to improve race relations on campus (J.D. Hart, A. Matheny, personal communication with G. Orfield, January 29, 2001).

In addition to reviewing its admissions policies, UF staff quickly established additional initiatives to help reduce the effects they feared One Florida would have on minority student enrollment. Race-conscious affirmative action, aside from admissions, intensified. These programs included both recruitment of new minority students and support to entering and current minority students. The programs for current students were also designed to improve the image of UF in the eyes of future minority students.

In 2001, the Admissions Office and the Office for Student Financial Affairs cooperated to "aggressively recruit students from diverse backgrounds. This team travels throughout Florida and focuses its efforts on under-served areas of the state" (Wilder, Anderson, & Mickelberry, 2001, p. 5). There is added emphasis placed on targeting minority students, and efforts to involve entire families, not just students (Associate Vice President for Student Affairs M. Rollo, personal communication with P. Marin, January 31, 2003). In addition, the Office for Student Financial Affairs hired a full-time Minority Outreach Coordinator to provide support to this initiative (Wilder et al., 2001, p. 5).

Additional student programming was implemented by the Division of Student Affairs. By providing additional support to its students, UF aimed to let potential students know they could "come here and we'll take care of you (Associate Vice President for Student Affairs M. Rollo, personal communication with P. Marin, January 31, 2003), and thus help attract minority students. Gator Launch, a minority career-mentoring program, was implemented in spring 2001 by the Career Resource Center. The goal was to both serve current students and attract greater numbers of minority students by showing focused support for underrepresented students (Sawyer, 2001). In addition, funds were provided by UF's program office to develop multicultural programming in the student union (Associate Vice President for Student Affairs M. Rollo, personal communication with P. Marin, January 31, 2003).

Another program, A.S.P.I.R.E. (African American Student Program for Improvement and Retention in Education), is a grant-based initiative launched by the university's counseling center in 2000. It was developed "out of concern that the State of Florida's One Florida initiative might

impact African-American enrollment at UF" (Hessler-Smith, Delgado-Romero, & Jackson, 2001, p. 7). A.S.P.I.R.E. provides "consultation and support to programs and organizations that promote the recruitment and retention of African American students" (Counseling Center, University of Florida, 2003). For example, A.S.P.I.R.E. staff work closely with the admissions office, accompanying staff on recruitment trips and participating in the on-line interview process to serve as a resource for describing psychological and social development services at UF. The program also offers psychological programs that support the academic mission and consults with departments on issues that affect the academic climate. This year the program serves both graduate and undergraduate students and has added a consultation component for departments committed to diversity training (Program Coordinator L. Jackson, personal communication with P. Marin, January 30, 2003).

The campus has a variety of special visitation programs, summer programs, and scholarships geared for minority students. UF's College of Education has established Florida Alliances, which are partnerships with five urban high schools in Florida chosen for their high minority population and "failing school" status (Associate Vice President for Student Affairs M. Rollo, personal communication with P. Marin, January 31, 2003). This program involves academic and support units at UF, such as admissions, recruitment, and student services. The goal is to help improve the quality of these high schools and develop a pipeline of students into UF. Teacher training is provided to assist with curriculum development, and mentoring relationships are developed. In addition, five four-year scholarships of $12,500 are available to the top five students from each of the partner schools (Associate Vice President for Student Affairs M. Rollo, personal communication with P. Marin, January 31, 2003). Through extensive student and teacher contacts on campus, the program creates recruitment pipelines to minority communities in Jacksonville, Miami, and Orlando (College of Education, University of Florida, 2003b)

These types of programs are important additions to any campus interested in maintaining and increasing a diverse student population. In this instance, however, many initiatives were implemented specifically to counter the negative effects expected from One Florida on recruiting and enrolling minority students at UF. This suggests that these programs become even more important in the face of ostensibly race-neutral admissions policies. Had the minority enrollment at UF continued to decline, the increasing isolation of minority students on campus would have severely hindered recruitment. Unfortunately, other states like California and Texas, where affirmative action has been completely eliminated, cannot employ race-conscious programs like these at UF.

Although UF is the most salient example of an institution that suffered from the loss of affirmative action under One Florida, the Talented 20 program was irrelevant at UF because the campus is not required to admit Talented 20 students who do not meet their admissions standards. Instead, most Talented 20 students at UF are students who would have been admitted under their standard admissions policies. In 2002, however, UF implemented a 5 percent admissions plan ("U. of Florida," 2002) to make sure the Legislature did not force the university to "take even more students that don't meet its requirements" (Miller, 2002, p. 5).

Beginning with the fall 2002 entering class, Florida public high school students who graduate in the top 5 percent of their high school and complete the same nineteen credits required of

Talented 20 students are guaranteed admission to UF (Office of Institutional Research, University of Florida, n.d.), even if they have SAT scores that would normally lead to their rejection (Admissions Counselor J. Hinson, personal communication with E. Lee July 23, 2002).

Class rank is determined by using the rankings listed on a student's transcript. If the transcript does not contain a ranking, the student is ineligible. For the Talented 20 program, rankings are calculated by the school districts and then sent to the state Department of Education, but may not be noted on the student's transcript (Admissions Counselor J. Hinson, personal communication with E. Lee July 23, 2002). In fact, only 70 percent of freshmen students at UF submitted their class rank when applying for fall 2002 admission (Office of Institutional Research, University of Florida, n.d.). It is too early to assess this program.

Examining the University of Florida, it is clear that there is a difference between the impact of One Florida (the loss *only* of race-conscious admissions policies) and the impact of the Talented 20 policy (guaranteeing admission to the top 20 percent of public high schools). At UF, while they have lost race-conscious affirmative action in admissions, they heavily use race-targeted programs to address minority recruitment and practically ignore the Talented 20 program. The Talented 20 percent plan program is an unsuccessful race-neutral alternative. It is the race-targeted recruitment, aid, and support programs that are critical at UF.

In early September 2002, UF President Young praised the recovery of minority enrollments from the steep decline of 2001. "The University of Florida is proud that it has been so successful in its efforts to bring minority students to our campus. The numbers speak for themselves and underscore our commitment to diversity. We intend to continue these efforts and hope we will be even more successful in bringing minority students to campus in the years to come" ("Lt. Governor Brogan," 2002). The recovery from the loss in the first year of One Florida was clearly related to UF's concerted race-conscious efforts to maintain diversity.

Florida State University

Florida State University (FSU) in Tallahassee is the state's second most competitive campus. Rapidly growing with expanding research operations, FSU is a popular location for students and plays an important role in the state's capital city.

Unlike the University of Florida, FSU did not resist Governor Bush's decision to end affirmative action. In fact, its leaders questioned the future of race-conscious affirmative action after the Texas *Hopwood* decision in 1996 (T. D'Alemberte, L. G. Abele, personal communication with G. Orfield, February 1, 2001). After being threatened by demands for data from the Center for Equal Opportunity, a conservative think tank, the FSU General Counsel had recommended ending affirmative action (L. G. Abele, personal communication with G. Orfield, February 1, 2001). They were already deemphasizing race and preparing alternative admissions techniques when One Florida was announced. The campus decided to drop affirmative action in 1999 (J. C. Barnhill, Jr., personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001). Therefore, the entire fall 2000 class was admitted with no explicit consideration of race.

Because it was less competitive and in an unusually favorable situation for attracting Black students, FSU leaders believed they could maintain diversity without race-conscious affirmative action in admissions. In contrast to UF, where Black students often felt isolated, FSU was very close to FAMU, the historically Black campus. Both that campus and the Black professionals working for the state government created an attractive community with an active social life for Black students (T. D'Alemberte, personal communication with G. Orfield, February 1, 2001).

A basic approach at FSU was to invest more heavily in recruiting in Black and Hispanic areas of South Florida, since racially targeted recruiting was legal under the One Florida Plan. Outreach was used to create new relationships and bring in minority students for special summer programs. President D'Alemberte concluded that "what we're doing is affirmative action" (personal communication with G. Orfield, February 1, 2001).

Enrollment management was an important tool. University leaders kept close records of applications. The basic effort to keep up minority enrollment, located in the admissions office, involved race-targeted recruitment, which was not forbidden as it was in California and Texas. Admissions Director John Barnhill said that "targeted recruitment" was absolutely essential to maintaining diversity (personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001). The campus watched the applications closely, purchased more names of potential minority students from the College Board, conducted more high school visits, did more personal telephone calling and counseling with potential students, and extended its deadlines, because "frequently minority students apply late" (J. C. Barnhill, Jr., personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001). FSU officials said that, in spite of this, their minority numbers would have declined if the school had been limited to its usual allowed number of new admits. When the campus reached that level it was showing a serious loss of minority students, but the state authorized it to admit 500 more students, a substantial increase (J. C. Barnhill, Jr., personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001). That was essential to achieve the gains that state leaders claimed came from the percent plan.

FSU engages in minority outreach by sending minority recruitment officers to high schools with high minority student populations in cities including Miami, Tampa, and Jacksonville. Since the One Florida initiative, FSU has beefed up its minority recruitment efforts with a focus on increasing the number of minority student applications in order to yield higher minority enrollment. Admissions officer Jerrell Harris said he believes the increase in minority enrollment is a result of these increased efforts (personal communication with S. Flores, February 3, 2003).

After the implementation of One Florida, FSU merged two minority-retention programs, Summer Enrichment and Horizons Unlimited. These former programs originally targeted only to minority students and women and were established because of the state's desegregation plan. The new program, Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement (CARE), "is an academic support unit that assists the Florida State University in its outreach and support to undergraduate students who may be disadvantaged due to economic, educational or cultural circumstances. CARE provides programs and services targeted to the first-generation college student, and helps to facilitate their preparation, recruitment, adjustment, retention and graduation from college. CARE implements programs and services for eligible entering freshmen students, as well as for selected area middle and high school students with similar backgrounds and characteristics"

(Division of Undergraduate Studies, University of Florida, 2002). CARE, which seeks to serve approximately 300 students per summer, is an alternative admissions program for students who do not meet traditional academic criteria for admission to FSU. CARE participants fill out a separate application and CARE staff participate in the FSU admissions decisions to bring in these first-generation and/or disadvantaged students. This is solely an FSU program and, according to its director, CARE is the university's effort to diversify the student population (CARE Director, A. Richardson, personal communication with S. Flores, February 3, 2003). The University also maintains its Incentive Scholarship for Freshmen (Admissions Officer, J. Harris, personal communication with S. Flores, February 3, 2003), a minority scholarship that provides $2,000 per year over four years. It is given to the "best minority freshman students admitted to the University based upon high school grades and test scores" (Office of Financial Aid, Florida State University, 2003).

FSU officials dismissed out of hand the claim that the Talented 20 plan accounted for their enrollment success. Admissions Director Barnhill said the claim was "somewhat mystical," since his office did not even receive notification of who was in the Talented 20 pool in the first year until long after the class was admitted. Even in the second year, more than three-fourths of the class was admitted before the list of Talented 20 students was received. The policy, he said, had had "zero effects on admissions," and FSU had not been told to admit any student on the list (Financial Aid Director Darryl A. Marshall, personal communication with G. Orfield, January 31, 2001).

Even a brief discussion of the policies and practices on the state's two most selective campuses reveals a strikingly different picture than that portrayed by state leaders. There is simply no evidence that the Talented 20 program had any significant impact in dealing with the termination of affirmative action in admissions on these campuses. Both relied very strongly and clearly on the substantial intensification of the other types of race-conscious affirmative action – recruitment, financial aid,[23] fostering a positive image of the campus, and supporting successful diversity on campus. Each campus invested leadership and money in these clearly racially targeted efforts to expand opportunity for the state's minority students and preserve the diversity each institution strongly valued.

The Talented 20 Policy Is Not a National Model

Florida leaders claim that alternative admissions policies can generate results that are equal to or better than the race-conscious policies they replaced. Ever since Governor Bush announced the Talented 20 program, widely divergent claims have been made regarding its results. On the one hand, it is described as an effective and successful alternative to race-conscious affirmative action and is presented as a well-developed plan to increase access for diverse students, without consideration of race, to Florida's State University System. As such, the governor has recommended it as a national model. On the other hand, this plan is portrayed as a political maneuver that ignored the realities of education in the state of Florida and hurt access for underrepresented students. This report concludes that the Talented 20 plan is largely inconsequential. There was little affirmative action in the institutions within Florida's State

[23] UF has announced that it will no longer award scholarships based on race ("Race-based," 2001). This change will need to be monitored to understand its impact on enrollment.

University System before the implementation of One Florida. Where affirmative action had been important the percent plan had no impact, except to intensify parts of the remaining, still legal race-conscious affirmative action process.

Many factors point to the inadvisability of considering this a national model to replace race-conscious affirmative action in higher education. As confirmed by the governor, many of the universities in the SUS had switched to race-neutral admissions programs prior to the One Florida initiative (Bush, 2000). This makes it impossible to compare his new policy to previous results of race-conscious admissions programs, except in the case of the system's most selective institution, the University of Florida. At UF, after an initial increase, there was a significant decline in Black students in the second year of the program. Preliminary data from 2002 suggests that, at best, the proportion of Black students has returned to the 1999 level (One Florida, 2002). Changing high school demographics, however, indicate that this should not be considered a complete success.

The perception that the success behind the Talented 20 program is race-neutral is false. While Florida's SUS institutions may not be practicing race-conscious admissions, their recruitment, financial aid, and retention initiatives designed to improve access *are* race-conscious. States that are unable to consider race and ethnicity in any of its decisions, however, would not be able to benefit from these initiatives in the ways the SUS has. These initiatives make it clear that there is a significant understanding about the importance of using race as a factor in some way to achieve even the minimal success claimed by Governor Bush.

While important, Florida's targeted initiatives to improve K-12 education and increase the college pipeline will, at best, take years to be successful, especially to see if they actually increase access to higher education. In addition, in many areas, while some achievement measures may show gains for Hispanic and Black students, they also show gains for Asians and Whites (One Florida Accountability Commission, n.d.). This means that the achievement gap is not closing, which is what is necessary to improve access to competitive colleges.

Another reason the Talented 20 policy should not be used as a national model is that the SUS cannot be compared to selective institutions where race-conscious admissions matter most. Enrollment data indicate that five of the SUS institutions admitted over 70 percent of freshman applicants, with the least selective institution admitting over 82 percent. Furthermore, the most selective institutions in the SUS cannot be compared to institutions like the University of California at Berkeley that admits only 26 percent of its applicants, or a private institution like the University of Pennsylvania, which admits only 22 percent ("Peterson's," 2003).

Additional realities of selective institutions also make the Talented 20 policy impractical. Selective institutions around the country generally admit from a pool of students that are from both in- and out-of-state public and private high schools. The Talented 20 policy, however, only serves public high school students in Florida. This may make sense for a *system* like Florida's, in which 87.5 percent of the first-time-in-college students for fall 2000 were Florida residents (Board of Education, Division of Colleges & Universities, n.d.a) and 75.5 percent of first-time-in-college students in 2001-2002 were from public schools in Florida (J. Kersh, personal communication with S. Flores, February 6, 2003), but it is not transferable to institutions or

systems that draw from a much larger pool of students. As an example, one-third of the University of Michigan's study body is from out of state (University of Michigan, 2003). An in-state admissions policy like the Talented 20 plan, therefore, would not be of use to such an institution. Furthermore, the Talented 20 policy eliminates from consideration the many important factors that colleges and universities, especially selective ones, find necessary to weigh when admitting a class of students. Simply admitting the top 20 percent of seniors ignores two key issues: 1) high schools range in their ability to graduate college-ready students (in some there are many more than twenty percent, while in others far fewer); and 2) many additional characteristics are important in college admissions decisions, such as leadership skills and potential to succeed in college.

The criteria, design, and administration of the Talented 20 program also make it inappropriate as a model. Because of the limiting eligibility criteria, White and Asian students are disproportionately eligible for the Talented 20 guarantee, and thus benefit much more than Blacks and Hispanics. This does not serve higher education well. Instead it perpetuates existing inequities. It also relies on the existence of racially segregated high schools to generate student diversity. In this way, it enacts a penalty for integration. Finally, the ineffective administration of the program further minimizes its already small potential effect.

The actual results of the Talented 20 policy should be reason enough not to use it as a national model. An increase of fewer than 180 newly eligible students in each of the first two years is hardly reason to replicate the program. These low numbers do not address institutional diversity or college access. Furthermore, examining the results by proportion show that enrollment of racially and ethnically diverse students should be higher each year simply as a result of state and school-level demographics.

Further analysis of the Talented 20 policy is still needed. Not only will it be important to review the outcomes of future admitted classes, but it will also be necessary to track the Talented 20 students (in particular, the "newly eligible" students) admitted each year to investigate their retention and, ultimately, graduation rates. In addition, specific research will be needed at the University of Florida as they implement their 5 percent plan.

Even longer-term analysis will be needed to understand the effect the Talented 20 policy has on the pipeline into Florida's graduate and professional schools. If the number of minority undergraduates decreases, the pool of graduate school applicants will likely decrease as well, since many graduate students earn bachelor's degrees from schools in the SUS (Selingo, 1999d). Furthermore, an ongoing review of the implementation of the policy, including any changes, as well as the increasing selectivity of several of the SUS institutions will need to be monitored relative to Talented 20 admissions. As institutions become more selective, the percentage of newly eligible students will likely decrease.

Since other states, university systems, and institutions are interested in alternative admissions plans, it is important to disseminate accurate information about new options – their components, how and if they work, and their effects on institutions and students. Without accurate information, states and higher education institutions could implement policies that are meaningless and have no significant effect on underrepresented students, or that reverse the

progress achieved to date in higher education access – which have been the results of the Talented 20 program. What has apparently produced minimal gains in Florida's two selective campuses has been affirmative recruitment, aid, and support policies targeted at minority students and schools.

Appendix A

One Florida Initiative: Section on Non-Discrimination in Higher Education

Section three of the One Florida Initiative (Executive Order No, 99-281, 1999), *Non-Discrimination in Higher Education*, prohibits the use of race or gender for undergraduate and graduate admissions decisions made by the institutions in Florida's State University System (SUS). In it, Governor Bush indicates the following:

a) It is the policy of my Administration to support equal educational opportunities for all qualified Floridians, to prohibit discrimination in education because of race, gender, creed, color or national origin, and to promote the full realization of equal educational opportunities throughout the State.

b) I hereby request that the Board of Regents implement a policy prohibiting the use of racial or gender set-asides, preferences or quotas in admissions to all Florida institutions of Higher Education, effective immediately.

c) The Office of Policy and Budget is hereby ordered to develop an implementation strategy for all other aspects of my Equity in Education Plan by December 31, 1999.

Appendix B

Table B1. 19 Credits Required by the Talented 20 Program

Topic	Number of Credits
English	4 credits (3 must include substantial writing requirements)
Math	3 credits (Algebra I and above)
Natural Science	3 credits (2 must include lab)
Social Science	3 credits (e.g., history, civics, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, geography)
Foreign Language	2 credits (same language for both units)
Additional Electives (from above 5 categories)	4 credits

Source: Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, p. 8.

Appendix C

Table C1: "Sliding Scale" for Admission to Florida's State University System

GPA[a]	SAT[b]	ACT[c]
2.0	1140	25
2.1	1110	24
2.2	1090	24
2.3	1060	23
2.4	1030	22
2.5	1010	21
2.6	1000	21
2.7	990	21
2.8	980	21
2.9	970	20

[a] *GPA in the required academic courses.*
[b] *SAT taken after March 1995.*
[c] *Effective for fall 2001 applicants.*

Source: Department of Education, Florida Division of Colleges & Universities, 2001, p. 10.

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